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Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security

I. Introduction

1. In his statement made on behalf of the Security Council (S/PRST/2005/52), the President of the Council welcomed the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), contained in the report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2005/636, annex).

2. The System-wide Action Plan was developed in 2005 pursuant to the statement by the President of the Security Council contained in document S/PRST/2004/40, in which the President, on behalf of the Council, requested the Secretary-General to develop a system-wide action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Action Plan was prepared by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, in close cooperation with the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) and its Task Force on Women, Peace and Security, and draws on contributions received from 39 United Nations entities.

3. The Action Plan covers virtually all major areas of action in the field of women, peace and security, reflecting the mandates provided by the Security Council in its resolution 1325 (2000) and the relevant presidential statements.[1] It encompasses a total of 269 actions and provides a framework for inter-agency activities during the period 2005-2007. Activities are clustered under each area of action according to a typology of action, for example, gender mainstreaming policy and strategy development, capacity-building, support to local women's organizations, research and knowledge management, and advisory services.

4. In his statement (S/PRST/2005/52), the President of the Security Council, on behalf of the Council, requested the Secretary-General to update, monitor and review the implementation and integration on an annual basis of the System-wide Action Plan and report to the Council, starting in October 2006. The present report responds to that mandate.

[1] S/PRST/2001/31, S/PRST/2002/32 and S/PRST/2004/40.

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II. Objectives and methodology of the implementation review

5. The Secretary-General tasked the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to undertake the review of the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan and to take into consideration the views of stakeholders, including key United Nations entities, Member States and non-United Nations actors in order to ensure an inclusive approach.

6. In reviewing the implementation of the Action Plan, the Office focused on the level of implementation of the Plan by United Nations entities; the assessment of institutional capacities, including monitoring, reporting and accountability procedures; and ways and means of strengthening the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and mainstreaming a gender perspective in all areas of action of the Plan.

7. In view of those objectives, information from United Nations entities was sought on the following three central clusters of issues:

- Achievements in the implementation of the Action Plan under the major operational areas of action, including examples of good practices
- Gaps and challenges in an institutional and organizational capacity to implement the Action Plan, including lessons learned
- Recommendations for future action to address the challenges identified and accelerate the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000)

8. Various methods of data collection and analysis were employed to ensure the reliability and validity of findings. In collaboration with Member States, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations, a three-phase consultative process was conducted, including a comprehensive online questionnaire forwarded to all 39 United Nations entities that had contributed to the Action Plan, a series of interviews with Organization officials and experts and the holding of focus group discussions, including with Member States and civil society organizations. The review covers the period from 1 November 2005 through 30 June 2006, the deadline set by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women for completion of the questionnaire.

9. Responses to the questionnaire were received from 29 of 39 United Nations entities.[2] The assessment team held 12 interviews with senior officials across the United Nations system and organized two focus group discussions: one with members of the Security Council and "Friends of 1325" and the other with the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. Extensive documentary research was undertaken to substantiate conclusions.

[2] The Division for the Advancement of Women/Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Public Information, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, ECA, ESCAP, ESCWA, FAO, ICTR, ICTY, ILO, INSTRAW, OCHA, OHCHR, OSAGI, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNIFIP, UNITAR, WFP and the World Bank.

III. Findings of the implementation review

A. Progress and good practices in thematic areas

10. The collective responses to the review indicate that a significant amount of work to implement resolution 1325 (2000) is under way. Many activities are relevant, effective, innovative and important. Progress in implementing a wide array of activities envisaged in the System-wide Action Plan has been achieved, albeit to a different extent in each area of action. A brief overview of progress in the implementation of the activities planned in each area of action is set out below. The overview is linked to the mandates/orientation under each area of action as spelled out in the Plan. Good practice examples are also provided for each area of action.

1. Conflict prevention and early warning

11. The main emphasis is on increasing women's full participation in conflict prevention work and decision-making; developing effective gender-sensitive early warning mechanisms and organizing systematic gender training for all staff working on early warning and conflict prevention. The Department of Political Affairs facilitated women's participation in early warning and conflict prevention work, including through consultations with local women's groups on the situation on the ground, and completed a gender-sensitive framework for political analysis to be used by the Department's desk officers. The World Bank focused on mainstreaming a gender perspective into a conflict analysis framework to ensure the collection of data disaggregated by sex and gender-sensitive analysis of the prevention of conflict. The Economic Commission for Africa used the African gender and development index to monitor national implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in 12 countries. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has started to integrate gender-specific indicators into newly developed early warning/early action systems for emergencies and to pilot a system for the collection, analysis and dissemination of early warning data for elaborating gender-sensitive conflict prevention policies and programmes. UNIFEM completed three pilot projects on gender-sensitive early warning indicators. The World Food Programme (WFP) successfully integrated gender analysis in its vulnerability analysis and mapping and emergency food security needs assessment and completed mainstreaming a gender perspective into its contingency planning guidelines and early warning tools. The International Labour Organization (ILO) completed research studies on early warning within the framework of a broader research project on strengthening employment in response to a crisis. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), together with its partners, organized a series of training programmes on the prevention of conflict for national human rights institutions in Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Europe and Central Asia.

2. Peacemaking and peacebuilding

12. The strategic orientation of United Nations system activities has been focused on strengthening capacity-building in the field to ensure women's full participation at all stages of the peace process, especially in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements. The Department of Political Affairs issued a policy statement on gender equality and strategic goals of gender mainstreaming and launched a peacemaker databank and operational mediation support tool. The Department

continues to encourage women's participation in political life through capacity-building seminars and workshops and provides support for recently elected female members of Parliament in the Central African Republic, whose numbers increased during the last legislative elections.

13. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNIFEM supported women's participation in elections in Haiti, Burundi, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including through the provision of leadership training, resulting in an increase in women's involvement in electoral processes. Senior leaders of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations missions hold regular meetings with women representatives of host countries. UNIFEM facilitated the participation of Sudanese and Somali women in peace negotiations and issued a methodology note and a gender mainstreaming checklist for the Somalia joint assessment mission. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific successfully developed a strategic programme framework that focuses on gender-sensitive capacity-building in conflict and post-conflict countries. The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) prepared a guide for national action planning, entitled "Securing Equality, Engendering Peace". The Division for Public Administration and Development Management Department of Economic and Social Affairs updated an online, searchable, interactive website containing more than 2,000 profiles of conflict prevention and peacebuilding organizations in sub-Saharan Africa. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNDP, the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), WFP and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) conducted various gender-sensitive workshops and training on resolution 1325 (2000) for civilian, military and humanitarian personnel, and national and local NGOs. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in collaboration with partners, prepared a leadership training course for refugee women, that includes a module on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). OHCHR successfully facilitated the demobilization mechanisms in Colombia to incorporate measures to guarantee the rights of victims, especially women and children, to truth, justice and reparation.

3. Peacekeeping operations

14. The United Nations entities focused on developing policies and operational tools to facilitate gender mainstreaming into all thematic and functional areas of peacekeeping, including the mandates of peacekeeping missions, and on providing regular gender training for all categories and levels of peacekeeping personnel. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the lead entity in this area, finalized a policy statement and a Department-wide action plan for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) at Headquarters that would ensure, inter alia, the inclusion of data disaggregated by sex and the increased recruitment of women in peacekeeping. An Interdepartmental Task Force to oversee its implementation was also established. Fifty Member States participated in a Department of Peacekeeping Operations-organized policy dialogue to review strategies to increase the number of women military and police personnel deployed in United Nations peacekeeping missions. The DPKO, the DPADM/DESA, OHCHR, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and other entities, through various initiatives, mainstreamed

a gender perspective into training modules for troop and police-contributing countries to sensitize peacekeepers about gender relations and changes in gender roles owing to the experience of the conflict. The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women prepared an updated version of the inventory of United Nations resources on women, peace and security. There were also positive advancements in developing and strengthening the network of gender advisers, gender focal points and gender units in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has eight full-time gender advisers in multidimensional missions and focal points in the remaining missions. OHCHR appointed focal gender focal points to all human rights sections of peacekeeping operations.

4. Humanitarian response

15. The main focus of United Nations activities is on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all humanitarian assistance programmes and on providing operational support in that respect. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance co-chaired by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Health Organization is spearheading the development of a handbook entitled "Women, Girls, Boys and Men: Different Needs — Equal Opportunities. A Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action". The handbook provides guidance on gender analysis, actions for mainstreaming gender into assistance sectors as well as indicators to measure progress. Under the leadership of UNAIDS, the joint United Nations work programme on scaling up HIV interventions for addressing the humanitarian needs of populations was finalized. UNHCR implemented the age, gender and diversity mainstreaming strategy in 40 field operations. WFP mainstreamed a gender perspective into its programming activities and provided assistance to integrate gender into national food security policies and programmes. UNFPA prepared a programme policy manual for humanitarian response, including guidance on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), trained a total of 750 health-care workers in Darfur, Sudan, and provided technical assistance to the Guatemala National Ministry for Women's Affairs to develop a national action plan on women, peace and security.

5. Post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation

16. United Nations activities target the development and implementation of gender mainstreaming policies for post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes and relevant gender training and promote women's participation in decision-making forums on post-conflict reconstruction and governance. The activities of United Nations entities in Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Iraq, Kosovo (Serbia), Sri Lanka and Tajikistan, have demonstrated the importance of addressing existing gender inequalities through mainstreaming a gender perspective into reconstruction policies and programmes linked to the general provision of technical assistance and training in such areas as employment, health and education. UNDP has concluded a comprehensive gender review of its Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery that forms the basis of a strategic planning process, leading to a multi-year gender strategy. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) adopted a gender action plan to mainstream a gender perspective in all its activities, including its

post-conflict assessment programmes. In addition, UNEP reviewed from a gender perspective a guide for decision-making and practitioners analysing the impact of human displacement in Liberia on the environment. ILO, together with UNHCR, launched entrepreneurial programmes for returnee and refugee women in Angola and Mozambique and published the study entitled "Building entrepreneurial capacity for returnee and refugee women in Angola and Mozambique". The World Bank incorporated gender into the United Nations Development Group/Working Group (UNDG/WG) post-conflict needs assessment and prepared a study entitled "Gender, Justice and Truth Commissions". As a result of the activities of the Post-Conflict Trust Fund of the World Bank, 75 per cent of 534 women in Iraq who received training found a job and 2,300 women in 130 literacy centres in Kosovo were reached through the women's literacy project. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) provided advisory services to the Ministries for Women in Iraq and Palestine, established a programme on sex-disaggregated data for Iraq and conducted multiple workshops for women in Iraq and Lebanon. INSTRAW established a web section on security sector reform and coordinated a global virtual network for practitioners, academia and United Nations agencies with over 150 members worldwide. The partnership between UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNIFEM and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in Sierra Leone became a good practice example in addressing gender and HIV/AIDS in post-conflict reconstruction and was replicated in Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia. Also in Sierra Leone, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations facilitated a technical assessment mission to develop recommendations aimed at increasing the participation of women in the political process.

17. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme conducted a gender review of disaster management in Africa to establish the extent to which gender issues have been integrated into disaster management policies and practices. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations conducted regular workshops and training for emergency professionals to update them on existing gender tools and methodologies. The Division for the Advancement of Women/Department of Economic and Social Affairs provided technical assistance to the Governments of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. UNESCO developed a handbook on "Gender, Conflict and Journalism" for South Asia and organized a training workshop for women journalists in Mauritania. The United Nations Mine Action Services-Department of Peacekeeping Operations achieved progress in addressing the special needs of women and girls in all mine action programmes through the development and implementation of gender guidelines for mine action programmes, which were distributed through United Nations-managed and supported programmes to Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in mine/explosive remnants of war-affected countries, and the conduct of a series of gender training workshops.

6. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

18. United Nations entities focused on the needs of women and girls in all relevant policies and programmes and on providing gender training. United Nations entities, including the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the World Bank, UNICEF, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and ILO increasingly focused on gender dimensions of all three elements of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

through the development of special projects and programmes for women and girls formerly associated with fighting forces and armed groups. The Inter-agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration finalized the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards module on women, gender and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Training Group is completing the development of a relevant training strategy. The Department for Disarmament Affairs provided training to parliamentarians and their advisers in the Latin American and Caribbean region on mainstreaming a gender perspective into national firearms legislation. UNDP, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and UNIFEM initiated an awareness-raising campaign in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to ensure incorporation of gender concerns in the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. Similar campaigns were held in Liberia and the Sudan by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNDP.

7. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in armed conflict

19. The strategic focus has been on awareness-raising and training, as well as monitoring, investigating, documenting and reporting of gender-based violence, and providing assistance to survivors. Progress was made in the elaboration of practical guidelines and manuals on how to integrate prevention and response to gender-based violence within health, education, justice and multisector projects led by a subgroup of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance, facilitated by UNFPA. UNHCR instituted standard operating procedures in field operations to prevent and respond to gender violence and disseminated the Manager's Checklist to monitor the implementation. UNFPA also developed five gender-based violence case studies in Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Kosovo, Palestine and Sierra Leone, and conducted relevant gender training. The Division for the Advancement of Women/Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women prepared a study on all forms of violence against women that provided an in-depth analysis of all forms of such violence, including before, during and after conflict. The International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) provided assistance to the judiciary in Rwanda through temporary attachments and internships in Tribunal activities. OHCHR and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations provided substantive assistance in the elaboration of the new rape and inheritance laws in Liberia. The Joint Partnership initiative of the United Nations Trust Fund on Violence (managed by UNIFEM) provided much needed assistance to those under threat of gender-based violence. UNFPA provided rape treatment kits in Darfur that enabled health facilities to provide clinical care to 20,000 rape survivors.

8. Preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff, related personnel and partners

20. The United Nations entities, including the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), ICTY, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNITAR and WFP reported measures taken to make personnel aware of all relevant rules and regulations on sexual exploitation and abuse, including through improved training modules and tools. The Secretary-

General's bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13, entitled "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse", has been included in the appointment terms of United Nations police, military observers and other experts on mission, and United Nations Volunteers as well as all consultant and contractor contracts. The Executive Committee on Peace and Security/Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs Victim Assistance Task Force, led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNICEF, developed a draft policy statement and comprehensive strategy for assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel. The Department of Public Information developed gender-sensitive public information and strategic guidance materials for dissemination to all peacekeeping missions on zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations established conduct and discipline teams in the Department headquarters and in eight peace operations. The Department for Disarmament Affairs created the Ethics and Disciplinary Committee to take action and report on situations of alleged unethical conduct.

B. Institutional and organizational gaps and challenges

21. Despite overall positive assessment of the current stage of the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan, the review identified a number of gaps and challenges. Lack of stability and security; violence, including gender-based violence; poverty, discrimination, democracy deficits, impunity and weak public institutions generally arose in situations of conflict and post-conflict. In addition, a number of common institutional gaps and challenges to the systematic implementation of the Action Plan were identified. Some, such as accountability, coherence and coordination, were reflective of broader challenges faced by United Nations entities outside the realm of women, peace and security. Others were related to the actual implementation of the activities identified in the Plan and to the Plan itself. Interviews with senior United Nations officials and focus group discussions with the Member States and the non-governmental organization community contributed to a deeper understanding of the gaps and challenges that inhibit the full implementation of the Action Plan and resolution 1325 (2000). Implementation gaps can be grouped into the following categories.

1. Capacity

22. A number of entities reported inadequate understanding by their staff of such concepts as gender analysis and mainstreaming. In interviews, many senior officials particularly emphasized difficulties in translating gender mainstreaming into programmatic action owing to a lack of expertise. Some entities reported that there was an overall feeling that such expertise was not always a requirement at the unit and entity levels involved in the implementation of the Action Plan. In other entities, even where findings from gender analysis were available, the capacity to take up and use the conclusions from such analysis was generally insufficient. Other gender mainstreaming tools, such as gender budget and gender audit, were not effectively utilized.

23. The lack of a common understanding of gender and gender mainstreaming and especially of their practical application has serious consequences for gender-sensitive programme planning and policymaking. With growing awareness of

conflict consequences for women in recent years, many programmes and projects of the Action Plan have sought to focus on women and to try to respond to their specific needs in the areas of health, education and access to resources. However, such approaches alone failed to address the larger contextual issues behind women's marginalization in peace and security processes. The rising incidence of gender-based violence against women during a conflict and in post-conflict settings had been one very visible factor contributing to the appeal for gender mainstreaming, though the emphasis still remained on women and failed to focus adequately on the role of men.

24. Inadequate use of existing advisory and technical expertise was viewed by the respondents as a challenge. They were unanimous in observing that the placement of gender advisers[3] in peacekeeping operations by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was one of the major capacity-development achievements across the United Nations system that positively contributed to the implementation of the Action Plan. However, the expertise of the gender advisers was reported to be often underutilized. In addition, many of the gender advisers were appointed at a junior level, precluding them from access to senior officials.

25. In the same vein, the respondents also felt that the expertise of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, in her own capacity as the Chair of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, was not sufficiently utilized, and that overall the available gender expertise throughout the system was often excluded from mainstream intra and inter-organizational decision-making processes.

26. The absence of a system-wide knowledge and information management system that would serve both as a repository for good practices and lessons learned was also identified by the respondents as an important capacity gap. Many operational entities reported the need for better dissemination of information to enable them to understand the cultural and gender context. Similarly, there was a need for better dissemination of resolution 1325 (2000) itself at the country level.

27. Most United Nations entities signalled effective partnership with civil society as a challenge, especially in the field. Even where the role of civil society in post-conflict peacebuilding was recognized, the networking with women's organizations was inadequate.

2. Leadership and commitment

28. Respondents viewed the issue of leadership and commitment to pursue the implementation of the Action Plan both in intergovernmental bodies and in the United Nations system as one of the serious weaknesses affecting implementation of the resolution. Despite the Security Council's many strategic initiatives to promote gender equality and support the empowerment of women, its attention to gender issues is not systematic. Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), as of 30 June 2006, only 55 of 211, or 26.07 per cent, of country-specific Council resolutions include language on women or gender. At the entity level, in most cases, the extent

[3] In November 2005, to strengthen the impact and coherence of the work of gender advisers at the mission and Headquarters levels, the advisers adopted the title of "gender advisory team" in order to describe their collective identity as a resource team with a view to enhancing the gender-sensitive approach to peacekeeping.

to which the actions identified in the System-wide Action Plan were advanced within the entity was largely dependent on individual heads of entities, rather than on a systematic and holistic approach. This ripples throughout the system with an overarching impact on the outcomes of the Action Plan. Insufficient gender mainstreaming was viewed as a result of the organizational culture which prevails throughout the United Nations system, where most senior staff do not consider it their role or obligation to develop institutional capacities for gender mainstreaming.

3. Accountability

29. Institutional and individual accountability is a prime concern for the entities of the United Nations system. Despite recent enhancements to the accountability within the Secretariat[4] and in other parts of the United Nations system, including the implementation of results-based management, improvement in the Performance Appraisal System, performance data and expansion of training for levels of staff, very few United Nations entities reported having accountability mechanisms in place for peace and security issues. The interviews and focus group discussions also indicated a clear consensus that accountability for peace and security issues, as well as for their gender dimensions, needs to be significantly strengthened, particularly at the middle and senior levels.

30. Other related challenges include regular reporting, effective monitoring systems, as well as access to and use of sex-disaggregated data, gender-specific information and indicators. Most monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming is currently implemented by using specific gender evaluations, audits, assessments or surveys. Only a few entities have incorporated a gender perspective into existing monitoring instruments, including results-based reporting processes. Weaknesses in monitoring and reporting mechanisms and practices compound problems of accountability within United Nations entities.

4. Resources

31. Judging by the number of references made by the participants in the review, the issue of resources allocation, both financial and human, is particularly important. There are insufficient funds and human resources for women, peace and security activities. The women, peace and security agenda is a woefully underfunded mandate under the regular budget. Most entities rely on extrabudgetary resources that, while very limited, are increasingly becoming the main source of funding women, peace and security interventions. The reliance on extrabudgetary resources, which are often short term, mostly earmarked flows of resources, precludes mid and long-term planning and commitment to make a difference on the ground. Moreover, such flows of resources for women, peace and security do not correspond to the needs, but rather depend on extraneous factors such as media profile, strategic interests, political will, perception by donors regarding performance by United Nations entities and recipient Governments. Longer-term arrangements, such as trust funds and similar mechanisms, and the active involvement of donor countries were considered critical and should be explored further.

[4] See A/60/312 and A/60/846/Add.6.

32. There is also a wide gap between gender-related mandates and human resources allocated for women and peace. The following challenges in human resources capacity and support mechanisms have been encountered by United Nations entities:

- Low representation of women at decision-making levels, both at Headquarters and in peace support operations[5]
- The insufficient number and, in most cases, the low grade-levels of gender-related posts
- The position of gender units, advisers, experts relative to senior management and decision-making and agenda-setting mechanisms
- The preference for the gender focal point mechanism, in which often relatively junior staff have focal point responsibilities added to their regular duties rather than appointment of full-time gender experts
- Inadequate staff assigned to work on the implementation of the Action Plan, relative to the nature, scope and demands of the tasks
- Absence of gender expertise in job descriptions and terms of reference
- Absence of criteria related to gender mainstreaming activities and results in performance evaluation.

5. Coordination and coherence

33. Challenges in inter-agency coordination in implementing the System-wide Action Plan reflect the larger system-wide problem of coordination and coherence addressed by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all"[6] resulting from different governance structures for the many parts of the system and overlapping mandates. The findings of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment are expected to provide much needed insight into how the United Nations can work better to achieve gender equality, including in coordinating its activities.

34. While respondents to the review emphasized significant potential dividends anticipated from United Nations entities working more closely together both at the Headquarters and the country-levels, they were virtually unanimous that the United Nations system as a whole is still not delivering services in a coordinated and effective way. This often resulted in duplication and the overlapping of activities or fragmented efforts. Not only must actions and strategies of individual entities be coordinated, but policies, programming, delivery approaches and evaluation systems should also be coherent and harmonized. Thus, they underlined the following persisting challenges: lack of coherence in the focus and format for gender mainstreaming policies and activities; minimum system-wide standards and indicators for implementation, thus resulting in different levels of attention given to

[5] For example, as at 30 June 2006, only 25.3 per cent of staff at the D-1 level and above at Headquarters were women; in peace support operations, only 10 per cent of staff at that level were women (see A/61/318).

[6] A/59/2005, paras. 193-212.

gender equality in each entity's planning; and inadequate use of intersectoral synergies to obtain maximum impact of efforts carried out by United Nations entities in individual areas of action.

35. IANWGE and its Task Force on Women, Peace and Security are the only established mechanism within the United Nations system that promotes collaboration, coordination and regular exchange of information on women and peace. The Network acts as a technical body on gender mainstreaming and is a forum for developing methodologies, sharing information and lessons learned and ensuring the link between the normative and operational dimensions. However, it plays no policy role and its membership cannot commit United Nations entities on major policy issues or joint programmes.

36. The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women has been assigned responsibility by the Secretary-General to promote inter-agency cooperation, including through enhanced advocacy, strengthening the Inter-Agency Network and Task Force. However, the lack of clarity regarding the Office's inter-agency mandate for coordination in the area of women, peace and security and the lack of necessary resources weakens the Office's effectiveness.

37. The Secretary-General, following the 2005 Summit Outcome, requested the entities of the United Nations system to recommit themselves to mainstream a gender perspective in all their work and to come up with a system-wide policy and strategy for implementation of the agreed policies on gender equality and advancement of women. He specifically drew attention to resolution 1325 (2000) and the urgency of implementing it. The Inter-Agency Network elucidated elements of the policy and strategy. The High-Level Committee for Programmes and the High-Level Committee for Management of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) were briefed by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women in April 2006 and are developing procedures and mechanisms to monitor progress in implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as well as in establishing accountability of senior management in that process. These proposals will be discussed by CEB at its session in the fall 2006.

6. Action Plan

38. With regard to the Action Plan itself, a significant number of respondents noticed the absence of baseline information, performance standards and indicators, time frames and results focus. Such shortcomings detracted from its overall utility as a planning and programming document and made it difficult to have an accurate assessment of what progress was being made. It was further acknowledged that the Action Plan was not established as an integrated United Nations system-wide strategy, but rather as a compilation of activities, planned by United Nations entities or ongoing, in those areas for action where expertise and resources were available. Hence, some overlaps and gaps were inevitable. In addition, emphasis was placed on the importance of establishing valid links between the actions reported and any measurable or meaningful change in the lives of women most affected by conflict.

IV. Further actions to accelerate the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)

39. The present first review of the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan has highlighted the progress made and remaining challenges and gaps in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). On the basis of the findings of the review, a number of key priority areas where further action is needed are set out below:

(a) Continued vigorous and multi-pronged engagement with Member States;

(b) Development of an effective accountability, monitoring and reporting system for a new cycle of the Action Plan;

(c) Strengthening system-wide capacity for the full implementation of the resolution;

(d) Enhanced coordination across the United Nations system, including in the field;

(e) Alignment of resources with priorities.

40. The further actions to strengthen the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) are grouped into the above categories.

A. Continued vigorous and multi-pronged engagement with Member States

41. In order to identify and close implementation gaps, the United Nations system must engage in a much more concerted manner with Member States on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). To this end, the following actions are recommended in order to further strengthen the implementation of the resolution:

(a) Engage in a vigorous and coherent advocacy campaign with Member States, particularly in conflict-ridden or post-conflict countries, to increase political momentum for the full implementation of the resolution and seek concrete undertakings to this end;

(b) Working closely with the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and other United Nations bodies, integrate women's rights and concerns into the United Nations peace and security, humanitarian and development agendas throughout all phases of conflict prevention, management, peacebuilding, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction and consolidation;

(c) Assist Member States in the development and effective implementation of national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), pursuant to the call by the Security Council on Member States "to continue to implement resolution 1325 (2000), including through the development of national action plans or other national-level strategies" (S/PRST/2005/52);

(d) Advocate for strengthened intergovernmental oversight, monitoring and accountability, including by setting up, at the level of the Security Council, a working group on women, peace and security or designating a focal point;

(e) Member States should provide political and other support to United Nations initiatives and activities aimed at achieving the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

B. Development of an effective accountability, monitoring and reporting system for a new cycle of the Action Plan

42. A robust and effective accountability, monitoring and reporting system for implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) should be developed and implemented. The review of the System-wide Action Plan showed that despite its shortcomings, the current Action Plan serves its purpose as the first mapping step in the development of a system-wide coordinated and integrated approach to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The early experience of implementing the Action Plan suggests that where there is capacity to identify gender dimensions of peace processes, develop results-based policy priorities and operational interventions and monitor the implementation and results, the approach can potentially make significant differences on the ground. It is essential that the accountability and monitoring system be integrated into the existing monitoring and reporting frameworks, such as the results-based management framework. In tandem with this effort, it will be necessary to define concrete measures, targets and time frames to assess implementation.

43. Thus, beyond 2007, the Action Plan would need to be reconceptualized in order to transform it into a results-based programming, monitoring and reporting tool. To achieve this objective, the following actions are suggested:

(a) During 2007, the remaining year of the current Action Plan, use the information contained in the Action Plan to develop an electronic databank knowledge and information management system, through which United Nations entities can record progress, good practice and lessons learned;

(b) Working through the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security, start the preparation of a new focused action plan, which should be a tool for a holistic and coherent United Nations strategy that fully takes into account synergies within the United Nations system;

(c) Develop or strengthen an accountability framework and mechanisms at all levels of implementation, in particular individual accountability of senior management both at the Headquarters and country levels;

(d) Hold heads of entities, special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General responsible for mainstreaming a gender perspective into policies and programmes and full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000);

(e) Clearly articulate the roles and specific complementarities of various entities in implementing the resolution;

(f) Define a common set of goals, system-wide standards and indicators for measuring progress and success within the specified time frame;

(g) Establish systematic monitoring and reporting procedures that would guarantee the enhanced accountability for the implementation of the commitments undertaken.

C. Strengthening system-wide capacity for the full implementation of the resolution

44. Weaknesses observed in capacities of the United Nations system for the implementation of the Action Plan testify to the urgent need for the large-scale systematic development of internal capacity by United Nations entities on issues relevant to women, peace and security. To this end, the following actions would be required:

(a) Finalize the system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming transmitted to the High-Level Committee on Programmes and the High-Level Committee for Management by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women for adoption by CEB;

(b) Enhance United Nations staff capacity, in particular in the field, in gender analysis and mainstreaming, including mandatory core gender training, with periodic follow-up, courses on management and leadership incorporating gender mainstreaming and technical modules on specific aspects of gender analysis or operational mainstreaming;

(c) Enhance the commitment of staff, in general, and the commitment and leadership of top-level management, in particular, to broaden support for gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes on peace and security to achieve full and accelerated implementation of resolution 1325 (2000);

(d) Develop a comprehensive online knowledge and information management system to collect and disseminate good practice examples of and tools for integrating a gender perspective into peace processes;

(e) Continue to develop gender mainstreaming tools and methodologies and collect and disseminate data disaggregated by sex;

(f) Promote mainstreaming of a gender perspective into policy development, funding and activities of the Peacebuilding Commission and its Support Office to ensure linkages between gender equality, peace and security;

(g) Strengthen the resources and capacities of gender units and ensure the appointment of gender advisers at senior levels with direct reporting access to senior management;

(h) Make full use, as appropriate, of available internal expertise on gender and draw on the capacity of civil society.

D. Enhanced coordination across the United Nations system, including in the field

45. Effective coordination would involve joint programming and resource mobilization; priority and standard-setting, systematic knowledge and information-sharing and accurate, timely reporting, thereby building ownership and strengthening collective capacities at the global, regional, national and community levels. The System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has the potential to become a viable coordination instrument across the

United Nations system. The following actions are necessary in order to improve inter-agency coordination:

(a) Promote joint planning, programming, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation, priority-setting and advocacy and designate, as necessary, lead agencies;

(b) Within the framework of CEB, establish a clear delineation of responsibilities on implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) among United Nations entities based on their mandates and comparative advantages;

(c) Strengthen inter-agency cooperation in the field, including through United Nations country teams and gender advisory teams, and improve collaboration with national Governments, national mechanisms for gender equality and advancement of women, women members of Parliament and civil society;

(d) Strengthen cooperation and interaction between policy entities at Headquarters and operational entities in the field to achieve the efficient translation of the normative frameworks on gender mainstreaming and advancement of women into practical implementation;

(e) Strengthen collaboration and interaction between the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Peacebuilding Support Office in implementation of resolution 1325 (2000);

(f) Strengthen the strategic leadership and coordination responsibility of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women for the system-wide implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the promotion of gender mainstreaming into policies, programmes and projects.

E. Alignment of resources with priorities

46. Systematic implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the related support to Member States, including national action plans, requires flexible, predictable and timely funding based on demonstrable need. Women and peace activities are often considered as an add-on responsibility to peace and security mandates that are expected to be met within existing budgetary resources. The experience of the United Nations system consistently shows that this expectation is not realistic. Accordingly, the following actions are proposed:

(a) Establish priorities among the joint activities on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) to be undertaken by the United Nations system in line with financial targets;

(b) Actively pursue dialogue with Member States in the context of the preparation of the programme budgets of United Nations entities to include clearly earmarked resources for implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the Action Plan;

(c) Establish mid and long-term financial targets for implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) linked to annual fund-raising, pledging conferences and official development assistance;

(d) Member States to provide adequate and regular funds for women, peace and security activities.

V. Conclusions

47. Achieving the goal of gender equality set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and resolution 1325 (2000) is one of the primary and enduring responsibilities of all Member States and therefore one of the pre-eminent areas in which the United Nations needs to assist its Member States. Accordingly, the multifaceted security and peace-related work of Member States and the United Nations must systematically incorporate a gender perspective as well as address women's empowerment in their policies, programmes and activities. While gender equality is increasingly recognized as a core issue in the maintenance of international peace and security, the role of women in peace processes generally continues to be viewed as a side issue rather than as fundamental to the development of viable democratic institutions and the establishment of sustainable peace.

48. The System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) reflects these global dynamics. The Action Plan comprises a wealth of system-wide information on current activities. It represents the first attempt to develop an integrated and coherent approach to promote the issues of women, peace and security, and mainstream a gender perspective into United Nations programmes and policies dealing with peace and security. The present report presents a comprehensive and candid assessment of the first eight months of the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan. The review, mandated by the Council, has enabled the limitations and also the opportunities presented by the Action Plan to come forcefully to the surface so that collective action to remedy the former and enhance the latter can be taken.

49. The implementation review conducted by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women showed that organizations of the United Nations system have made commendable efforts and there has been significant progress in many areas of the System-wide Action Plan, in particular in such areas as peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding. Interesting and innovative projects are being carried out by United Nations entities to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in armed conflict and provide humanitarian assistance to populations. Progress has been achieved in other areas of action of the Plan.

50. Nonetheless, much more can and should be done by all parts of the United Nations system at all levels, both at Headquarters and in the field. In addition to progress, the review identified existing weaknesses both at Headquarters and at operational levels and has resulted in a series of concrete actions proposed to address them. A number of institutional and organizational challenges have constrained the effective implementation of the Action Plan.

51. The implementation review has confirmed the benefit of having the System-wide Action Plan. It is essential that the Plan be revised along the lines proposed in the present report by building on the gains remedying the shortcomings in order to make it a more effective tool for strengthened inter-agency coordination, enhanced accountability and ownership, and improved organizational culture that is supportive of the goals and ideals contained in resolution 1325 (2000). In bringing the System-wide Action Plan to a new level, the United Nations system can become a more strategic partner to Member States, supporting their capacities to ensure international peace and security and turning gender equality commitments into reality.

52. The expeditious implementation of the actions contained in the present report would facilitate the accelerated implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the United Nations system. Particular attention will have to be devoted to engaging Member States and other actors to strengthen political will and commitment in order to reinforce political momentum for implementing the resolution. The ultimate responsibility for implementation lies with Member States, and the Secretary-General calls upon the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission to give priority attention to the situation of women in each conflict and post-conflict country to achieve concrete results. The United Nations system requires the support of Member States in implementing the System-wide Action Plan. Greater efforts are also necessary at the United Nations-entity and system-wide levels to improve accountability and coordination and enhance the capacity of the United Nations system to support the implementation of the resolution. More determined efforts should be made to harmonize inter-agency policies and practices using the existing inter-agency coordination and coherence mechanisms.

53. With these considerations in mind, the Secretary-General recommends to the Security Council that the System-wide Action Plan be renewed beyond 2007 and prepared in line with the findings and actions contained in the present report.